

Award Acceptance Speech

Stacy Colgan

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This is a tremendous honor. Thank you SSWAA for this award and more importantly for bringing together all of these wonderful school social workers from across the nation to be inspired and enriched.

I'm overwhelmed and probably in the yellow zone (thank you Leah Kuyper) and so if you see me doing belly breaths, you will know why!

I chose to be a school social worker because I wanted to make change. I wanted to live by Gandhi's quote, "Be the change you wish to see the world." But, what I have found in a weird twist is that the harder I work and give, the more that I get back! My bucket is literally overflowing!

When I look out into the room today, I may not know you, but we are connected by this beautiful profession called school social work. Yes, it is beat down, drag out, sometimes defeating, and always exhausting, but IT IS WORTH IT. Thank you for being part of this with me.

I would like to recognize and honor the Illinois Association of School Social Work. My years on the board brought me some friendships that have enriched me professionally and personally. Tom Tebbe, thank you for this nomination and for being a strong leader for our organization! Carol Sebian, is unfortunately not here today, but she introduced me to the board when I was a first year school social worker and has continued to support me!

I would like to thank my husband, Tom, who is the most loving, supportive, genuine person that I have ever met. I am so grateful for you! I'd also like to do a little shout out to our four year old, Katelyn who is always asking how she can fill my bucket (she is definitely a product of a school social worker), and my two year old who gives the tightest hugs that just make every worry dissipate. They are back at home in Naperville, a suburb of Chicago.

Every day I wake up and head to Schiesher Elementary School in Lisle. A school made up of 400 students, 62 staff, and a passion for education. Education at Schiesher is no longer defined as academic gain, but also as social/emotional functioning. I'm grateful for dedicated staff, community and students who have recognized the impact that this has on everyone.

Thank you for this honor! Thank you for touching my heart. Thank you for serving others. Thank you for being school social workers!